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ABSTRACT

Much debate centers on motivating student in reading achievement. Should students feel motivated from within (intrinsic motivation), or is it better to have extrinsic motivation whereby external stimuli are used to help learners achieve optimally in reading? This paper aims to analyze the two points of view about motivating students in reading achievement. The paper first discusses intrinsic motivation in reading, citing individualized reading instruction as a model. It then discusses the testing and measurement movement as a strong element in extrinsic motivation in reading achievement. It outlines what might be some problems in state mandated testing and lists 10 external forces in a state to improve what is perceived to be deficient on the local school level. The paper then focuses on intrinsic motivation and reading instruction, citing 10 methods of motivation the teacher can follow. It states that the teacher plays a key role in the classroom with extrinsic motivation in teaching reading, and outlines 10 techniques the teacher may use to raise the bar in reading achievement. The paper concludes that most reading teachers will use a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic devices to motivate student reading achievement. It notes that teachers should experiment with both and decide which approach works best. (NKA)

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Reading: Intrinsic Versus Extrinsic Motivation.

by Marlow Ediger

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READING: INTRINSIC VERSUS EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION

There is still much debate pertaining to motivating students in reading achievement. Thus, should students feel motivated from within or intrinsic motivation? Or, is it better to have extrinsic motivation whereby external stimuli are used to help learners to achieve more optimally in reading? This paper will attempt to analyze the two points of view when motivating student progress in reading achievement.

Intrinsic Motivation in Reading

Intrinsic motivation is an ideal whereby from within the student is desiring to do more reading and at an increased level of difficulty. A model to present here is individualized reading. With individualized reading instruction, the teacher needs to have an maple supply of library books in the classroom from which each student may choose what to read sequentially. The learner is the chooser, not the teacher of the individual books a student wishes to read.

Library books need to be on different topics or genres. Why? Students possess different interests in what is chosen to be read. A wide variety of subject matter must then be available for student reading. Interest is a powerful factor in learning. With interest, effort is put forth in reading and learning. In addition to interesting library books which may be selected sequentially for individual reading, the student may also make choices based on his/her present reading achievement level. A student then may read more complex levels of library books, than others, due to possessing increased skills to identify words in context as well as being able to process more complex information. The act of reading requires students individually to be fluent in word recognition and comprehension (Ediger, 2000, Chapter Four).

After reading a library book, the student may have a conference with the teacher to assess knowledge acquired, skills developed, as well as attitudes revealed from having read a library book. Information may be recorded by the teacher when making comparisons with the next conference to be held to notice learner progress and achievement. The conferences are informal and should add to developing interest for student reading. Obstacles need to be put aside when encouraging learner interest in reading. Intrinsic motivation is then involved in a quality reading curriculum (See Ediger, 1994, 178-180). Advocates of intrinsic motivation in reading minimize the following:

1. formal testing to notice achievement. These may include standardized and state mandated testing which advocates feel may decrease interest by the student in reading.

2. required textbooks whereby all students in a classroom read the same sequential stories regardless of learner interests and abilities.

3. a philosophy of sameness for all students in the reading curriculum with a "one size fits all" set of beliefs.

Testing to Motivate Reading Achievement

The testing and measurement movement is strong in desiring to have extrinsic motivators to increase student reading achievement. State legislators, the governor, and state departments of education officials wish to document how well students are doing in reading. To document reading achievement, state mandated testing needs to be in the offing for all students. Each state mandated test needs to have accompanying objectives of instruction. These objectives, available to teachers, provide direction in terms of what is to be taught. The tests are aligned with these objectives so that validity is possible in testing, meaning that students have had access to learnings related to the test items.

To obtain reliability, pilot studies need to be made to take the kinks and weaknesses out of the test items. Vague, hazy test items might then be eliminated from the test. Test/retest, alternate forms, and/or split half reliability data from pilot study results provide information on how consistently the state mandated test measures learner achievement (See Ediger, 2000, 22-31).

Problems in state mandated testing might well be the following:

1. they may not be valid unless the teacher has a copy of the related objectives of instruction and follows them religiously in teaching students.

2. they provide a test score only, to show student achievement in reading.

3. they do not provide adequate information from student test results to use in diagnosis and remediation.

4. they generally stress use of multiple choice test items which are highly factual in their writing.

5. they do not provide opportunities for students to be creative in responding to test items.

State mandated tests omit completely what students have

achieved on a day to day basis in reading or how well students do in reading in life like, functional situations.

Motivation in desiring to become a good reader comes from extrinsic sources due to state departments of education having cut off points in order for students to be successful achievers in reading. Which extrinsic motivational devices are used to spur students on to become better readers and teachers to do a better job of teaching reading?

1. publishing report cards in the media whereby a state compares different school district's achievement in reading, among other curriculum areas. Comparisons are then made among school districts, making it competitive to out do others in the curriculum.
2. threats of state takeover of a school/district if student achievement is at an unacceptable rate.
3. withholding of state moneys for those school districts having low student achievement.
4. paying teachers based on student test achievement, a form of merit pay.
5. taking away teacher tenure if test results of students are continually low. This may be carried one notch further with teacher dismissal for low student achievement.
6. teacher accountability rules whereby a teacher is accountable for have students achieve state mandated objectives by doing well on the related tests.
7. withholding high school diplomas in high stakes testing if students fall below the level of receiving a pass mark.
8. not permitting a student to pass to the next sequential level of schooling if he/she fails a state mandated grade level test.
9. the teacher giving candy and other rewards to students who met a predetermined standard in class, generally determined through a cut off point on a teacher written test.
10. educational bankruptcy laws in which a state can declare a school or school district bankrupt in school achievement. Actions are then taken by the state to remedy deficiencies.

Each of the ten listed times above deal with external forces in a state to improve what is perceived to be deficient on the local school level. Extrinsic motivation is then used to manage the curriculum in order that schools improve in teaching students. Extrinsic motivation is used to motivate students, teachers, and administrators to do better than what has been achieved previously in teaching and learning situations.

Intrinsic Motivation and Reading Instruction

Intrinsic motivation depends upon the learner from within wishing to do more reading. Ideally, there is no compulsion here. Learners select reading materials to read sequentially based on person interest and effort to consume that which is interesting and meaningful. The teacher, of course, needs to assist in motivating students to do more reading. The following are methods of motivation:

1. develop a neat, attractive bulletin board for all to see. The contents of the bulletin board has a caption, illustrations, print discourse under each illustration, and new library book jackets displayed at intervals. Bulletin board displays need to be changed at different times to develop and maintain student interest in reading.
2. introduce new books in the library by telling something interesting about its contents to students. Show illustrations in the library book as interesting items in the story being shared.
3. read aloud sections of a library book to whet student appetites for reading its contents.
4. have selected students participate in reader's theater in order to motive learners to read the contents of the involved library book.
5. let students individually indicate interesting library books to others in class by pantomiming selected sections of a book.
6. organize a few students to engage in creative dramatics in front of the class to encourage reading of the book being dramatized.
7. encourage peers to read aloud to each other in small groups to motivate interest in reading that book.
8. use peer teaching to introduce new library books to others within a group setting.
9. use committee endeavors to discuss library books read and to stimulate each other to do more reading.
10. have teacher aids read to students using appropriate methods to encourage reading See Also Cunningham and Allington, 1999).

There are a plethora of approaches which may be used to motivate students intrinsically to engage in reading. With intrinsic motivation psychology, the reading teacher desires to

have students want to read and realize how interesting the act of reading can be. The home needs to encouragement to have materials available for student reading. Also, parents need to read to themselves as a model for student emulation. The school setting might wish to model reading by emphasizing Sustained Silent Reading (SSR). here, at designated times, everyone in a school reads to themselves; This provides a further model for student emulation. From within the student then observes and participates in numerous reading activities and experiences.

Extrinsic Motivation in Reading

With extrinsic motivation in teaching reading, the teacher plays a key role in the classroom. This is in addition to state mandated testing and its external procedures stressed in developing better readers. Thus, the reading teacher may use the following to raise the bar in reading achievement:

1. have high expectations with increasingly complex measurably stated reading objectives for student attainment.
2. reward students for achieving at a certain specific level in attaining the measurably stated objectives. The rewards may consist of inexpensive prizes, tokens to exchange for these prizes, a longer recess period, and a popcorn party toward the end of the school day for award winners, among others.
3. test and measure frequently with teacher written tests. Upping test scores should be a motivator for students.
4. assist students to develop line graphs showing progress in reading achievement. Seeing the line go up on the graph should be a motivator for students to achieve higher level objectives.
5. give a certificate to each student for having read a certain number of library books per week or biweekly. Standards are to be announced ahead of time so that each student may know how many books to read to obtain a certificate.
6. place a happy face or sticker for each item answered correctly from a workbook page in reading.
7. give praise to a student answering a reading compression questions correctly covering content from the basal reader.
8. provide carefully guided reading instruction to keep students on task and achieving optimally in ongoing reading lessons.
9. emphasize the use of teacher written worksheets to check reading comprehension each day. Inked rubber stamps may be used to stamp achievement on each sheet for students

doing exceptionally well when responding to worksheet items.

10. stress doing well in reading with slogans placed on the classroom wall to encourage student to do well in learning to read. These external approaches are to motivate student reading.

Closing

Most reading teachers will use a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic devices (See Ediger, 1999, 222-228) to motivate student reading achievement. However, selected teachers will lean more toward the intrinsic motivation psychology than otters, as well as vice versa. Teachers need to experiment with both and decide which approach works best in motivating reading achievement. Perhaps, Learning Styles Theory (See Searson and Dunn (2001) will help to decide which students do better with either intrinsic or extrinsic approaches of motivation in reading achievement. Multiple Intelligences Theory might also help determine how students wish to show how much as well as what has been learned in reading. Testing then may not be the only procedure (See Gardner, 1993).

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